major penalty specified in the said rules. Rule 30-A is a special procedure for certain categories of cases. IDPL has reported that Rule 30-A was applied in cases of unauthorised absence for more than 30 days and continued dis-obedience and defiance of the orders of the management. The expert legal advice obtained by IDPL indicates that the said rule is legally valid. The said rule can be invoked in specified circumstances and it provides for an opportunity to an employee to explain his conduct. The decision is taken at the highest level in the undertaking after scrutiny of each case by a Screening Committee and for reasons to be recorded in writing. Therefore, no separate provision of Appeal against an order passed under Rule-30A has been made. However, the general over-riding powers of review under Rule 33 are also applicable to orders passed under Rule 30-A. The review can be *suo-moto* or on a petition by the aggrieved person.

Prices of Edible Oils

1149. SHRI R. T. GOPALAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the details of price fixed for the edible oils for 1992-93 ;

(b) the extent to which it is remunerative to the farmers ; and

(c) the scheme of Government for the procurement of edible oils during 1992 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Under the existing policy of the Government there is no price and distribution control over edible oils. The prices of edible oils are determined by market forces.

(b) The ruling market prices per quintal of major oilseeds such as groundnut are Rs. 800 to Rs. 1000 and mustard Rs. 900 to Rs. 930 as against the minimum support prices for groundnut of Rs. 580 (1990-91) and of mustard at Rs. 670 (1991-92) per quintal.

(c) Government has no plans to procure any edible oil during 1992.

Separate Consumer Courts in the States

1150. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are planning to have separate Consumer Courts in the States ;

(b) if so, when Government propose to inaugurate such Consumer Courts in the States ; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and whether Government propose to consider this proposal in future so that the regular District Judges will be relieved of additional burden of work ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Government has enacted the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 which provides for three tier redressal agencies at national, state and district level to redress the grievances of consumers.

(b) As per information available with the Central Government, 28 State Commissions and 360 District Forums are already functioning.

(c) Supreme Court has directed the State Governments to relieve the regular District Judges of the additional burden of work where the work load is above 150 complaints per month. State Governments have been asked to comply with the directions.

1151. [*Transferred to the 8th May*, 1992]

Increase in the Prices of Essential Commodities

1152. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state : (a) whether it is a fact that the prices of a number of essential commodities have been increased by 25 to 75 per cent during the last one year ;

(b) if so, what is the increase recorded during the last one year of wholesale prices and retail prices in Delhi ; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to bring down the rising prices which cause great hardship to people, particularly the low income group ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) The percentage variation in the Wholesale Price Indices of essential commodities during the past one year-ending 18-4-1992 is given in the Annexure. [*See* Appendix CLXIII, Annexure No. 21].

(b) The average wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities in Delhi during April, 1991 and April, 1992 and their percentage variation is given in the Annexure [*See* Appendix CLXIII, Annexure No. 22].

(c) The Government has given highest priority to contain the rising trend in the prices of essential commodities within reasonable levels and to make them available to the common man throughout the year. Imports of Palmolein oil, Pulses etc. are effected to supplement their overall availability in the open market. State Governments were also allowed to import palmolien oil directly during 1991-92 period. Efforts are being made to augment the production of cereals, pulses, oilseeds etc. in the country. Towards this end, minimum support/procurement prices of these items have been enhanced substantially. Public Distribution System has been revamped and extended to far flung, remote and hilly areas, to reach its benefits to the poorer sections of the society. For this purpose 1700 blocks have been selected in the country under the revamped PDS programme. The allocation of Rice and Wheat for PDS has been increased from 182.10 lakh tonnes in 1990 to 217.79 lakh tonnes during the year 1991. The Government has also allowed an ad-hoc increase of 5% in the monthly levy sugar allocation to all the States/UTs from August, 1991 to September, 1992. The Government have intensified the action against hoarders, black marketeers and such anti-social elements under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. As a result of this, during the period 1-1-1992 to 30-4-1992 as many as 29183 raids were made, 1131 persons arrested, 1548 persons prosecuted, 54 persons convicted and goods worth Rs. 5.10 crores has been confiscated. As a result of various measures taken by the Government there has been a softening trend in the prices of some cereals, Pulses, Vegetable, Chillies, Tea Sugar, Gur, Edible oils, Kerosene and Salt in the recent past.

Corruption Charges against NCCF Officers

1153. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to reply to USQ 3136 in the Rajya Sabha on 19th Dec., 91 and state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the transporters have made fake entries as to the despatches of stocks from the producing centres octroi receipts and the delivery of stocks to the consignee societies ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that huge kickbacks were distributed amongst staff of NCCF, U.P. Handloom Corporation (UPHC) and the transporters ;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Internal Audit Officer, NCCF in his enquiry report indicated that the matter be investigated by the police to achieve the break through in the alleged group corruption between officers of NCCF/UPHC and the transporters ; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons for delaying the handing over of the investigation to CBI ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) The investigations conducted by the NCCF do not reveal that the transporters have made fake entries.